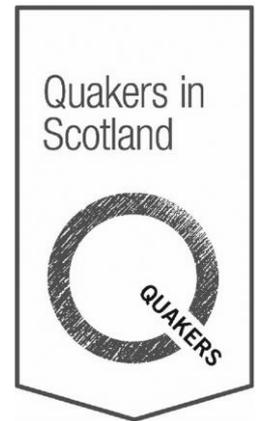


# GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND



## Minute 1. Worship

We began with worship during which the Welcome Statement from the Spring Conference of the Centre for Action and Contemplation was read. We were led to open ourselves, and to welcome the kaleidoscope of diversity amongst us.

## Minute 2. Welcome to all present

We are glad to welcome everybody to GM in Edinburgh. Those with us today include 2 attenders and 3 visitors. Edwina Peart the Diversity and Inclusion Officer of BYM, Michael Langford from Halgreen LM in Birmingham and Sandy Horsburgh Convenor of the Ecumenical Relations Committee of the Church of Scotland (joining us in the afternoon)

We will record the total numbers of all present and add them to these minutes.

East Scotland	6
South East Scotland	29
North Scotland	3
West Scotland	11

**Total: 52 ( including 3 visitors)**

## Minute 3. Eldership for GM.

We are glad that we have Elders present who are willing to uphold our Meeting for Worship.

## Minute 4. Reporter of this Meeting

We appoint Jay Wilkinson from West Scotland AM to report this meeting to *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friend*. We ask South East Scotland AM to report on GM in Aberdeen in September.

## Minute 5. New members and deaths

From Area Meeting minutes, since our last meeting we record the following new members:

- East - Martin Pippard (Dundee)
- North - Jessie Clerk (Aberdeen)
  - Amer Syed (Aberdeen)
- West - Pete Clarke (Glasgow)
- South East - Robin Nauman (Portobello and Musselburgh)
  - Philip Corrie-Hawes (Central Fife)

From Area Meeting minutes, since our last meeting we record the following deaths :

- East - Lorna Warren (Dundee)
- West - Bobby Locke (Argyll)
- South East - Anne Patrizio (Central Edinburgh)

## **Minute 6. Edwina Peart – Diversity and Inclusion Officer**

We have welcomed Edwina Peart, Britain Yearly Meeting's Diversity and Inclusion Officer. Edwina has spoken to us about her work to help Quakers examine diversity, with reference to race and class, and discern what needs to be done next. This post was set up in response to minute 38 of Yearly Meeting Gathering 2017.

### ***Minute 38: Living out our faith in the world: working with others to make a difference*** **EXTRACT**

*We have heard the call to examine our own diversity, particularly in our committee and organisational structure, locally and nationally. Diversity has several key dimensions and more may emerge in the future. We ask Meeting for Sufferings to look at how we can remove barriers and actively seek wider participation in the full life of our meetings, paying particular attention to race and age diversity and to keep Yearly Meeting informed in their annual report.*

Edwina spoke of the Importance of defining diversity and inclusion at the outset. The definitions she works with are:

*“Diversity is any dimension that can be used to differentiate individuals and groups of people from one another. This can be in terms of protected characteristics outlined in the 2010 Equalities Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).*

*Inclusion describes the efforts and practices that enable and support the equal treatment of difference, including those that are self-evident or inherent. Diversity and inclusion involve inward and outward perspectives.”*

We were introduced to issues around race and belonging by hearing the story of Enoch Kabalo, a young man born in Scotland of parents who came as refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo. At primary school he was the only black child in his class. He knew he was different, but this wasn't significant to him until he was racially abused. This flipped his understanding of who he was, and his self-doubt made him insecure with his friends. In his teens he struggled to have a sense of his racialised self and was confused when friends asked him questions he couldn't answer about black people, as if he was a universal representative. Studying Sociology at Dundee University gave him a positive experience of a more racially diverse community. He learned to be proud of his own blackness and of his Congolese heritage. He now sees himself as a Christian Black Congolese Scotsman.

Edwina suggested that attitudes to race are more positive in Scotland. Enoch spoke with a Scottish accent, therefore he found it natural to call himself Scottish. What part does language, accent and the sound of belonging play in our acceptance of people?

To address diversity and inclusion with integrity, we need to own who we are right now. Edwina has carried out a survey of Quakers in Britain to establish and record where we are at now. Questions in the survey covered ethnicity, nationality, age, sexual orientation, gender and class. This will form the baseline from which we can grow and change. The question about ethnicity challenged many Friends. Edwina pointed out that if ethnicity is not an issue for you, it is a privilege, which a lot of people don't enjoy. To move to a new diverse society, we need to know who we are ethnically.

We also need to acknowledge our history, not to wallow in our shame and guilt, but to be frank about our country of Scotland's role in the slave trade. Referring to a clip from a BBC Scotland programme on Scotland and Slavery, Edwina pointed out that the focus of owning our role in the sweat, blood, tears and trauma of this horror story, was positive. In England, the focus has been on our part in abolition.

She suggested that in Scotland we are making positive moves to celebrate our diversity and move to a more inclusive society. For example, Edinburgh University has created a new Chair in Philosophy, focused on African philosophy, colonialism and racism today.

As Scottish Friends, our challenge is to keep pace with the positive steps Scottish civil society is taking on diversity and inclusion. Are we ready to take action?

We finished by discussing the following questions:

1. What are some of the ways your ethnicity or race have affected your faith?
2. How can you move this agenda forward? What can this Quaker group do?

Edwina's words, challenges and questions will stay with us and help us open conversations with Friends not present today. We thank Edwina for being with us and we are delighted that her one-year appointment has been extended until October 2020.

**Minute 7. Between-Meetings Business** – Request for release from service on ACTS Members Meeting

Minute agreed by between-meetings procedure

**GM representative on ACTS Members Meeting**

Huw Lloyd-Richards has sought release from his role as GM Representative on ACTS Members Meeting. We agree to release him with immediate effect, and we thank him for his service.

We ask our GM Nominations Committee to seek a name for this role, with the intention of appointing that Friend by between-meetings procedure.

..... Adwoa Bittle, clerk

..... Elizabeth Allen, assistant clerk

..... Martin Burnell, clerk to GM Trustees

Date 9<sup>th</sup> April 2019

**Minute.8 Between-Meetings Business** – Request for release from service on Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office Engagement Advisory Group (ex-officio member of the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group)

Minute agreed by between-meetings procedure

**Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office Advisory Group (ex-officio member of the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group)**

Huw Lloyd-Richards has sought release from his role as a member of Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office Advisory Group (ex-officio member of the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group). We agree to release him with immediate effect, and we thank him for his service.

We ask our GM Nominations Committee to seek a name for this role, with the intention of appointing that Friend by between-meetings procedure.

..... Adwoa Bittle, clerk

..... Elizabeth Allen, assistant clerk

..... Martin Burnell, clerk to GM Trustees

Date 9<sup>th</sup> April 2019

### **Minute 9. Report on Meeting for Sufferings held 6<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

We receive and are grateful for the report on Meeting for Sufferings that was circulated with the documents in advance of this meeting and is attached to these minutes. Ann Kerr has added to her written report with more detail on the role of Meeting for Sufferings and on the current issues being considered by Sufferings. Our representatives and their reports are important to the working and life of our Yearly Meeting. Please try to keep abreast of what is happening by reading the reports and speaking with your Area Meeting or GM reps.

### **Minute 10. Welcome to our Ecumenical Visitor**

We welcome Sandy Horsburgh, Convenor of the Ecumenical Relations Committee of the Church of Scotland.

### **Minute 11. Nominations**

We are grateful for the work of our GM nominations committee. They have brought us the following names;

#### **Nominations for GM 8<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

##### **Clerk of GM**

Elizabeth Allen to serve from January 2020 until December 2022                      1<sup>st</sup> Triennium

##### **Clerk of GM Trustees**

Martin Burnell to serve from January 2020 until December 2022                      2<sup>nd</sup> Triennium

##### **Convenor of Parliamentary Engagement Working Group**

Joyce Taylor to serve from January 2020 until December 2020                      2<sup>nd</sup> Triennium

##### **Members of PEWG**

Martin Pippard to serve from January 2020 until December 2022                      2<sup>nd</sup> Triennium

Ed Tyler to serve from January 2020 until December 2022                      2<sup>nd</sup> Triennium

Rosemary Hartill to serve from January 2020 until December 2022                      2<sup>nd</sup> Triennium

##### **Northern Friends Youth Events Charitable Trust**

Simon Harding to serve from January 2020 until December 2022                      2<sup>nd</sup> Triennium

##### **Custodian of Records**

Paul Burton to serve from January 2020 until December 2022                      4<sup>th</sup> Triennium

##### **Iona Community Board**

Bob Dixon to serve from January 2020 until December 2022                      2<sup>nd</sup> Triennium

These names being acceptable we appoint them accordingly.

## **Minute 12. “Scottish Quakers: How do we liberate ourselves to focus on spiritual growth, community building and witness in the world?”**

Part of Minute 15 of our last GM read “We feel strongly that we don’t want to lose sight of this process and discernment. We ask our GM Committee to ensure it comes back to a future GM agenda.” Please see Minutes 12 and 15 of GM held 9<sup>th</sup> March 2019 for full discernment. GM clerks propose that we ask LMs and AMs to work with this summary paper between June GM and November GM. We ask that each AM brings an action plan to Perth on 16<sup>th</sup> November for discernment. Discernment at this GM will produce action points for GM to work with. Please find this document on the Scottish Quaker website. We ask our Administrator to send it to all on her list. It has been suggested that this document be audio recorded so that it is more accessible than just through the written word. Clerks agree to explore this possibility with Rici Marshall Cross. *This paper is a separate attachment and not copied on the end of these minutes with the other reports.*

## **Minute 13. Update on Action of Churches Together in Scotland**

Martin Burnell has told us of the positive news that the Transition Group, appointed by ACTS to advise on a smooth transition to a Scottish Christian Forum, has its report ready for an Extraordinary ACTS Members Meeting to be held 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at which Martin will represent GM. The Group recommend that the revised body remains a charity with trustees, an enabling group, an AGM, a wider forum gathering every three years and various subject forums. Churches could belong either as members with an annual subscription as at present or as Participants who would have less say in the running of the organisation. It would be serviced by posts of Coordinator and Secretary but with more work being undertaken by individual members and participants. We support these proposals and will return to this at our September meeting.

## **Minute 14. Annual Report and Accounts 2018**

Our Treasurer Nigel Dower has presented the Report and Accounts for 2018 and answered questions in relation to them. These had been approved by Trustees at their meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February.

During the year we received in income of £28,062.20 and our expenditure was £30,726.13. The deficit of £2,663.93 for the year was less than that anticipated in the budget in November 2017.

We accept the Report and Accounts and the Clerk has signed the Report on our behalf.

We are reminded that half of the legacy from Jenny Auld (c. £13,000) remains to be spent on special initiatives yet to be discerned. GM asks all AMs to give consideration to this and bring forward suggestions to our November meeting when we will consider these and other ideas in small group sessions.

## **Minute 15. Parliamentary Engagement Working Group report**

We receive and are grateful for the work of our PEWG and for their most recent report which has been circulated with documents in advance of this meeting. Joyce has spoken to this report and updated us further on their extensive work. This update is attached, with the report to these minutes. We are thankful for all this work done on our behalf.

## **Minute 16. Roots of Resistance**

We receive the following minute of SESAM with thanks.

2019/05/09 Roots of Resistance Cathy Holman (Portobello & Musselburgh) has introduced the work of Roots of Resistance, which will take action in September 2019 at the DSEI arms trade fair in London. Nine friends have volunteered from Scotland, and Cathy together with Cath Dyer (Polmont) have agreed informally to co-ordinate participation. Cathy has explained more about DSEI. Activities in London will include singing, craft activity and Quaker worship. The Sylvia Marshall bequest has offered financial support, and it is hoped that this will allow younger friends to join the action. We support this initiative and authorise our treasurers' team to offer support up to £1,000 in total. We ask our Clerk to pass this minute to the Clerk of General Meeting for Scotland. We ask local meetings to consider ways in which they might participate, including financial support for individuals taking part, where needed.

Alan O'Callaghan has told GM of the motivation behind taking part in the Roots of Resistance Campaign. R of R is a grassroots network of Quakers across the UK who are building a creative, vibrant and radical Quaker response to the Defence and Security Equipment International(DSEI) arms fair. Taking place in east London every two years, DSEI is a huge trade show bringing together 1,500 arms companies with representatives from militaries from around the world. Some of the world's largest companies market tanks, planes, drones, rifles, ammunition, surveillance technology, training and a huge array of other weapons. In witnessing our testimony to peace, Friends have been driven to join the movement of resistance to this arms fair, which brings global human rights violations to our doorstep. Arms fairs like DSEI are a key root cause of the violence and injustice around the world. Quakers have been involved in action against DSEI for many years. *Roots of Resistance* is planning to build an unprecedented Quaker presence at the 2019 fair, standing together against DSEI and the global arms trade.

We support action against DSEI by R of R and other groups. We agree, as individuals, to call on Scottish MPs and religious groups to do the same. We ask Area and Local meetings to encourage participation at this event. We ask AMs and LMs to also offer support, both financially and practically, those who wish to participate. (including travel to London).

We have heard of the need for Scottish Quaker activity to be coordinated. We understand that Cathy Holman [cathyholman1@gmail.com](mailto:cathyholman1@gmail.com) SESAM has agreed to act as coordinators for this. *Since GM more info has been passed to me. Please see end of the minutes.*

We were shown some samples of A5 mini banners that will be connected together to form the Roots of Resistance tapestry that will be part of this demonstration. Please find details of how to make them at [www.craftist-collective.com](http://www.craftist-collective.com)

### **Minute 17. Support for people undertaking Non-Violent Direct Action with Extinction Rebellion on the Climate Emergency**

Kath Dyer has raised awareness of the needs of people, both Friends and those out with the Society of Friends, who have had to find substantial funds to pay for legal proceedings following their arrests for action with Extinction Rebellion. We agree that GM clerks, clerk to GM Trustees and our GM treasurer will:

- a) find out what route to this financial and spiritual help is already used by Meeting for Sufferings.
- b) encourage Friends in Scotland to individually support a fund to help people with this need.
- c) report back to Area Meetings as soon as possible and GM in September about what we can offer and how we will go about this.

### **Minute 18. GM Safeguarding Policy**

GM Trustees have agreed a number of minor updates to the GM Policy on Safeguarding first agreed by Trustees in March 2013. The BYM Simpler Meetings project is working on a new model safeguarding policy and Trustees will review the GM policy in more detail once this is available. GM asks its Nominations Committee to bring forward a name for formal appointment as GM Safeguarding Co-ordinator (Madeleine Harding is currently acting in this role). We formally adopt the updated policy.

### **Minute 19. Book of Discipline Revision Committee**

Mary Woodward has told us of how the Book of Discipline Revision Committee (BoDRC) has started its work. They have begun to get to know each other and started to think about how to revise our book of discipline. They have thought about how they will meet and work and what their strengths and weaknesses are.

The collection tool that is already up and running can be found at the Quaker Faith and Practice page of the BYM website. It is for any of us to put in suggestions for the group's work

### **Minute 20. Violence Against Women**

Margaret Roy expressed her anguish regarding lack of time left for her report on The World Day of Prayer. Instead of being able to deliver her report Margaret challenged us to face the lack of Quaker engagement in her Violence Against Women Concern and to face the issue of how women across Scotland the UK and the World are suffering.

We wish to uphold Margaret in her distress and frustration. We note our process for the route of concerns. We understand that this concern has been heard at Glasgow LM and WSAM. We leave this with WSAM as whether or not this is brought to GM or to Meeting for Sufferings

### **Minute 21. Closing Minute**

We record our thanks to South East Scotland Friends for being our hosts at this GM and look forward to meeting again on 14<sup>th</sup> September in Aberdeen.

Adwoa Bittle  
Clerk

**For Information and encouragement.**

**Please encourage enquirers to look out for booking information for the next Enquirers Gathering. It will be held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2019 in Stirling with the Sunday session in Dunblane.**

## **Meeting for Sufferings April 6<sup>th</sup> 2019**

### **Report to General Meeting for Scotland**

There were two major areas of focus, on diversity and the vibrancy in meetings project. Edwina Peart brought an update on her diversity work. 1600 friends had responded to her questionnaire, and there had been a national gathering at Woodbrooke. Meeting for Sufferings broke into small discussion groups to consider:

1. Does anyone have a claim on the universal?
2. Do Quakers think that everyone should aspire to become middle class by middle age?
3. What makes for a welcoming welcome?

The group feedback will also be reported. The themes of assumption and privilege were also touched on and ministry focused on love and listening at a deep level. The work will feed into yearly meeting in May. The vibrancy project has been externally evaluated, and in addition to the report, we heard from the steering group, the Friend's House lead, Trustees and Woodbrooke. The findings are very positive in that the deployment of a supportive development worker enabled meetings to review and act. Role holders felt more confident and meetings strengthened, and transformed. This was well demonstrated by a video of some of those involved. The way forward was considered, including thinking of the costs. A phased approach to roll out, and decentralisation of some central support were proposed and the next stage will be considered by Trustees. It may be helpful to consider how the learning can be taken forward in Scotland. Two concerns were brought from area meetings. Bournemouth Coastal Area's minute about the need to uphold a universal NHS will be forwarded to all Area Meetings and information is available on their website. Friends in Wales brought concern about Brexit, and we were gently prompted to consider the current political turmoil with love and seek the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

The Court and Prison Register recognised an attender amongst the Stansted 15. A member was arrested and released without charge after an antifracking demonstration, and an attender was due to appear in court shortly, after an extinction rebellion protest. A rather different situation was noted where someone's loss of a contract was linked to their attendance at Quaker meetings. This falls outwith the current terms of the Court and Prison Register and further consideration will be undertaken before any changes are made. Reports were received from Trustees who have now adopted the strategic priorities, and an update on finances was given ahead of the presentation of accounts to yearly meeting. Income and expenditure are down, however the Hospitality Company continues to provide significant income. In common with the Conservative party, we gain more income from the dead than the living.

A number of appointments were made including that of our Friend Tina Cunningham of Glasgow LM to attend Ireland yearly meeting and 2 Quaker Recognised Bodies were approved.

Friends wishing further information are referred to the Britain Yearly meeting website

(<https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/meeting-for-sufferings/papers-and-minutes>) and are welcome to contact Ann Kerr as the General Meeting for Scotland representative.

## **Updated report of the Parliamentary Engagement Group to General Meeting for Scotland held on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

- 1. Petition 1603 re Military Visits to Schools:** we have received an update from the Deputy First Minister John Swinney on his consideration of the petition. The response is again superficial. It talks about "ongoing work" with the Scottish Government and partners (unspecified) and "continued dialogue" with the Ministry of Defence on data collection. He again rejects the idea of a Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) as being applicable to this situation. Mairi Campbell-Jack (Parliamentary Engagement Officer) is leading on a response with Forces Watch challenging the idea that a CRWIA is not relevant.
- 2. Children (Equal Protection from Assault) Bill:** Mairi gave evidence on our behalf at the hearing of the Equalities and Human Rights Committee which was held in Portree, Skye. The committee published its Stage 1 report which quoted extensively from our evidence. The Parliamentary debate stage of the Bill was held on 28<sup>th</sup> May. John Finnie, in his

summing up, said he was particularly grateful to Quakers and the Church of Scotland for their input

**3. Edinburgh Book Festival:** we have secured a slot at this year's festival for a debate on land reform. It is to be held in the New York Times Main Theatre which holds about 1700 and the date is 23<sup>rd</sup> August at 10am. Andrew Thin, Chair of the Scottish Land Commission, Alastair McIntosh, Quaker and writer on land issues, Agnes Rennie Chair of the Galston Trust which is a community land buyout scheme in Lewis and we hope, Andy Wightman Green MSP are likely to make up the panel and Sally Foster-Fulton (Head of Christian Aid Scotland) will be the moderator. The festival programme was launched on 6<sup>th</sup> June and the event is acknowledged as being in association with Quakers in Scotland. Tickets go on sale on 25<sup>th</sup> June and we hope Quakers will publicise the event widely.

**4. Priority on Land Reform:** Mairi and Joyce met with Andy Wightman, Scottish Green Party MSP and a major figure in campaigning for land reform. He welcomed Quaker involvement and felt that a voice coming from a spiritual viewpoint was often missing and would make a valuable contribution to the advocacy.

Members of the PEWG attended the open meeting in Edinburgh of the Scottish Land Commission and raised the issue of consultation on Land Tax. Members of the PEWG attended the Land Tax event on 1<sup>st</sup> June in Manchester which was organised by Quakers. There was a poor turnout but we were able to talk about what progress is being made in Scotland and this was reported in the Friend journal of 7<sup>th</sup> June

**5. Priority on Climate Change:** The Scottish Government has declared a Climate Emergency and produced proposals on how it will deal with climate change which includes seeing it as an issue across portfolios. Mairi is working with colleagues in Friends House to help plan our work.

GM for Scotland is now a member of Stop Climate Chaos. They are looking to raise about £12000 for a campaign this summer.

Joyce (PEWG Convenor) met with Sally Foster-Fulton who is head of Christian Aid in Scotland. Sally has been asked by Christian Aid to be the liaison person with Quakers in the UK which is really helpful. Climate Change is now the central issue for Christian Aid, looking at how it affects people particularly in developing countries. They are also running a campaign called the Big Shift – pushing for a shift from investment in fossil fuels to investment in renewables. They have a targeted campaign towards HSBC. We agreed to work together where possible.

Members of the PEWG attended the AGM of Eco Congregations at which Jim Skea, the co-chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) spoke. We also heard about the work of the Orkney Renewable Energy Forum.

**6. Meeting with the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary:** PEWG convenor attended this meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> June along with representatives from Scotland's Christian churches. The First Minister was unavailable on the day as she was in Portsmouth for the D-Day event so we met Aileen Campbell Cabinet Secretary for local government and communities. The items on the agenda were; the Scottish Government's relationship with Christian Churches – how to improve ways of working. Brexit and the effect on local communities and climate change – what can churches do to further support the government. The PEWG convenor was asked to lead on the discussion about Brexit.

**7. Website:** Mairi is working on copy for the GM website to bring the political work up to date and relevant.

8. **Evaluation of the advocacy project:** an evaluator has been appointed and work will begin shortly, looking at the achievements and effectiveness of the Scottish Advocacy Project. A member of the PEWG has been working with Friends House staff on the recruitment of the company to do this work. The evaluator is not a Quaker but is based in Scotland and demonstrated a good understanding of Quakers and our approach.
9. **South of Scotland Enterprise Bill:** John Finnie introduced an amendment to this Bill seeking to prevent enterprise money going to companies which produce arms and munitions. This follows on from Scottish Enterprise money going to Raytheon in Glenrothes, a company producing arms which are being used in Yemen and by Israel. The PEO sent a supportive briefing to MSPs ahead of the debate. Although the amendment was lost it was good that the issue was raised.
10. **Consultations:** the PEO has responded on our behalf to a consultation about the incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scots Law. She has also responded to a consultation about how tax changes are consulted on.
11. **Israel/Palestine & education:** there has been controversy in the Scottish Parliament about teaching materials which were produced to help teachers cover the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The materials were consulted on widely and were approved for use before being posted on the GLOW website where teachers have access to resources. However they were withdrawn by John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Education following lobbying by a Jewish group. The PEO has brought the Quaker/EAPPI resource "Razor Wire and Olive Branches" which has just been published for use in schools for 14 – 18 year olds, to the attention of Ross Greer MSP, who is one of the leading voices critical of the actions of John Swinney. The Quaker resource is at the moment being looked at by Education Scotland with a view to it being approved for use.

Joyce Taylor 8<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Allan O'Callaghan's Report. Please see minute 16 above.

Friends, I stand to speak with you about the DSEI arms fair in September. This conference is a meeting for arms producers and vendors, as well as state and private entities seeking to buy armaments. Past vendors at the fair have included those selling torture devices, and attenders usually include many countries with a history of human rights abuses, of funding and inciting wars, and of selling weapons to groups in neighbouring countries.

We seek to organise Friends to demonstrate our inability to tolerate this event, and to resist it where we are able and willing. A Quaker view on arms was written by All Friends Conference in 1920:  
QFP (5th) 24.40

**Our conviction is that Christianity has this to say to the world: 'Your reliance upon armaments is both wrong and futile. Armaments are the weapons of organised violence and outrage. Their use is a denial of the true laws of good living. They involve the perpetuation of strife. They stand in the way of the true fellowship of men. They impoverish the peoples. They tempt men to evil, and they breed suspicion and fear and the tragic results thereof.'**

We have seen in recent years where the weapons sold in the UK will be used: in Syria and Yemen, countries ravaged by drought from climate change and many years of war. In Palestine, where years of bombing and invasion have kept people trapped in desperate conditions for decades. In Brazil, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, where people are violently oppressed and murdered by their governments. While it is important for us to pursue constructive and positive change in our communities and abroad, we must also consider what we allow our government to do with our taxes and in our names.

The sale of arms in this context poses, to me, very troubling questions. Can we say we live peacefully while our government helps to sell weapons that stoke wars abroad? Can we say we promote equality when those wars impoverish and make homeless thousands of civilians? Can we say we live with integrity when those people are denied asylum in our country? Can we say we live sustainably when we allow money to be used on instruments of death instead of a future for all? Can we say we promote justice if we allow those, in the UK and abroad, who perpetuate this destruction to avoid reckoning? We may not resolve these questions by opposing DSEI, but we may at least live truthfully, knowing that we have lived in accordance with our testimonies as best we can.

I feel that Helen Steven (1984), writing about her action at Faslane submarine base, eloquently evoked the call to adventure that she heard, as each of us must hear in our own lives:

QFP (5th), 24.27

**If I see that base at Faslane as morally wrong and against my deepest convictions – as wrong as the gas chambers of Auschwitz, as wrong as the deliberate starvation of children – then by keeping silent, I condone what goes on there.**

**September Roots of Resistance** action at the **DSEI arms fair**, London. Prep on **Monday 3 September, 1.30 pm at Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ**. More details at <https://rootsofresistance.org.uk/action/>. **Cathy Holman** [cathyholman1@gmail.com](mailto:cathyholman1@gmail.com) is co-ordinating participation from our area – see attached AM minutes. Help with travel costs is available.

Here is the info from Elmbank Events, Glasgow - the contact is from Castle Douglas meeting

We have been asked to circulate this by Anne Macarthur from Castle Douglas Meeting who wants to know if others are intending to go too.

A number of NFPB (Northern Friends Peace Board) members are linking up with Friends across the country in response to an invitation from "Roots of Resistance". This is a grassroots network of Quakers across the UK who are building a creative, vibrant and radical Quaker response to the **DSEI** (Defence and Security Equipment International) arms fair, which takes place in London on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019.

For more information - <https://rootsofresistance.org.uk>.

Maya from Roots of Resistance adds:

Roots of Resistance has been working together for the past 6 months to try and mobilise Quakers from across the UK to get 1000 Quakers to be part of the resistance to the DSEI arms fair. We now have 250 people signed up, and we are starting to connect people who are in the same region. We hope that you will be able to connect with each other in your plans to get down to London, and in exploring if there are others in around you who may want to join. Please email to chat, and get back to us if you have any questions or if there is anything we can do to support you in joining in with our day of action on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September in London. In Friendship, Maya

[hello@rootsofresistance.org.uk](mailto:hello@rootsofresistance.org.uk)

Anne Macarthur [anne.macarthur@yahoo.com](mailto:anne.macarthur@yahoo.com)

### For information dates for 2019 - 2021

September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Aberdeen

November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Perth

March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Edinburgh

June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020 North

September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Dundee

November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 West

March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021 North

We ask that the Area Meetings concerned confirm that these dates are suitable with the local meeting and the venue. Also, that they inform the GM clerk of the venue and the contact details of the person nominated to oversee the local arrangements.

An exhibition well worth a visit

In Edinburgh Castle's war museum, there is currently an exhibition called Conscience Matters. It will be there for a year and is worth going to, if just to see Peter Tennant's papers and belongings from being in the Friends Ambulance Unit for part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. Peter was a founding member of Dunblane LM and the father of Alison Burnley SESAM. (Google Alison Burnley and Conscience. There is a lovely picture!)

For info on Stop Climate Chaos Scotland please search the title or contact their Campaign Manager, Gail Wilson, on [gail@stopclimatechaosscotland.org](mailto:gail@stopclimatechaosscotland.org)

**Please send ideas of topics you would like to see considered at GM with names of good speakers/presenters.**

And, so these minutes end as we began the day.....

*We would like to let you know that you belong. . . .*

*People on all parts of the continuum of gender identity and expression, including those who are gay, bisexual, heterosexual, transgender, cisgender, queer folks, the sexually active, the celibate, and everyone for whom those labels don't apply. We say, "You belong."*

*People of African descent, of Asian descent, of European descent, of First Nations descent in this land and abroad, and people of mixed and multiple descents and of all the languages spoken here. We say, "You belong."*

*Bodies with all abilities and challenges. Those living with any chronic medical condition, visible or invisible, mental or physical. We say, "You belong."*

*People who identify as activists and those who don't. Mystics, believers, seekers of all kinds. People of all ages. Those who support you to be here. We say, "You belong."*

*Your emotions: joy, fear, grief, contentment, disappointment, surprise, and all else that flows through you. We say, "You belong."*

*Your families, genetic and otherwise. Those dear to us who have died. Our ancestors and the future ones. The ancestors who lived in this land, in this place, where these buildings are now . . . we honor you through this work that we are undertaking. We say, "You belong."*

*People who feel broken, lost, struggling; who suffer from self-doubt and self-judgment. We say, "You belong."*

*All beings that inhabit this earth, human or otherwise: the two-legged, the four-legged, winged and finned, those that walk, fly, and crawl, above the ground and below, in air and water. We say, "You belong."*